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1. ALGERIA

Rumors of an early coup attempt are again current in Algiers.

Though these rumors may be premature, and in fact may be related to a long-expected government shake-up in which several rival groups in and outside the government hope to profit, they do reflect the Boumediene regime's basic instability and the very real and widespread discontent with it.

In the year since the military overthrow of Ben Bella, the collegial government headed by Boumediene has done little but mark time, particularly regarding Algeria's enormous problems of employment and food production. There is also some unhappiness in leftist circles that Boumediene seems to heed the moderates around him who have urged continued cooperation with France and a liberal economic policy. The latest plotters reportedly are pro-Arab neutralists, including followers of the imprisoned Ben Bella, in the army and gendarmerie.

There is no good evidence that the opposition to Boumediene is sufficiently organized or has sufficient military backing to mount a successful coup. The army, though not without its factions and frictions, is believed still basically loyal to Boumediene. Continued lack of progress toward solving Algeria's problems nevertheless will encourage rumors and anti-government plotting. (SECRET NO FOREIGN DISSEM)

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2. CYPRUS

Incidents provoked by both the Greek and Turkish Cypriots have once again increased tensions on the island and raised the threat of Turkish military intervention.

Twice this month Greek Cypriot authorities have clamped blockades on the Turkish sector of Nicosia, alleging Turkish Cypriot complicity in bombings in the Greek sector. The first ban resulted in the withdrawal of Turkish Cypriot judges from courts in the Greek sector. These courts were one of the few remaining areas of official cooperation between the two communities. The second blockade, imposed on 21 June, evoked a sharp Turkish demand for removal of the restrictions within 24 hours. The blockade was lifted shortly after the deadline, but Ankara's failure to act during the period of Greek Cypriot defiance may reduce local Turkish confidence in the mainland.

Tension has also resulted from a yet unresolved confrontation over Greek Cypriot road construction northeast of Nicosia. Completion of the road would divide an area normally dominated by the Turkish Cypriots. The UN is seeking to negotiate a compromise solution.

Kidnapings and other incidents provoked by both communities have added to the increased nervousness. On several recent occasions only the timely intervention of officials of the UN force kept tempers below the boiling point. The mandate of the UN force was recently extended by the UN Security Council to 26 December.

Although Greek and Turkish government representatives met in Brussels in early June to discuss Cyprus and are to meet again soon, there is still no sign that either Greece or Turkey is prepared to offer significant concessions. Even if Athens and Ankara could reach agreement, Cyprus President Makarios, who remains the key to any real settlement, is almost certain to repudiate any agreement in which he has not participated. (SECRET)

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3. CUBA

Castro's absence from the center of Cuban political activities since 1 May and his lackluster bearing during his last public appearance on 4 June have stimulated rumors and speculation that he is either in political trouble or seriously ill. Hard information is lacking.

Some rumors hold that Castro has become physically or mentally incapacitated. Others say the Cuban Communist political bureau removed him from power on 7 June because he intended to send military forces against the US naval base at Guantanamo. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] has reported "there is evidence" of "highest tensions" within the Castro regime. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] has reportedly remarked that "we appear to be dealing with Dorticos, not Castro." On the other hand, Castro did meet with the director general of UNESCO on 13 June.

Cuban press coverage of Castro's activities has been notably scanty in the past three weeks. It is also unusual that neither Castro nor any other regime official has seen fit to rebut the rumors, as has happened in similar situations in the past.

Lacking more substantial information, it is reasonable to assume that Castro may be temporarily ill or fatigued. If this is so, he may well return to his normal role upon recovery.

Should Castro be deposed, be permanently incapacitated, or die, we would expect him to be replaced initially by a collective leadership, supported by the Communist Party, in which President Dorticos and Raul Castro would play dominant roles. For a short period at least, the security forces probably would remain loyal to such a combination, particularly if high Interior Ministry officials were included in the consultations from the very beginning. Dorticos, because of his acknowledged competence, might be able to win predominance over the long run, but it seems more likely that a military group or individual, perhaps someone not now prominent, would eventually emerge to succeed Castro. (SECRET NO FOREIGN DISSEM)

4. BOLIVIA

The national elections set for 3 July will probably be held in a tense atmosphere. There is even some possibility of an eleventh-hour cancellation.

Political groups opposed to leading presidential candidate Rene Barrientos are trying to create disturbances to force a postponement of the elections. Barrientos is virtually assured of winning the presidency, and his opponents see a postponement or cancellation as the only way to stop him. Disunity among them reduces the probability that they will be able to muster enough support for the type of demonstrations which would force the junta to cancel.

An abstentionist movement is growing among the opposition groups. Although six parties now are in the race, as many as four may drop out by the end of this week. Abstention or the casting of blank ballots by a significant number of voters would be interpreted as a repudiation of Barrientos' candidacy and a challenge to his claims of a popular mandate. Opposition groups could later point to large-scale abstention as justification for toppling his regime.

The best assurance that the elections will take place as scheduled is the attitude of military leaders, most of whom want them to be held so the armed forces will be removed from the political arena. The president of the junta, General Alfredo Ovando, who himself may be involved in a plot against Barrientos, has reiterated numerous times in the past week that elections will be held regardless of how violent demonstrations may become. To guard against disorder, additional troops have been brought into La Paz and the entire armed forces put on alert.
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5. ARAB STATES

The rift that has been developing in the Arab world between the conservative monarchies and radical nationalist leaders is deepening.

In a fiery speech two weeks ago, Jordan's King Husayn virtually abandoned all pretense of conciliating Egypt, Syria, and radical spokesmen, and aligned himself more closely with Saudi Arabia's King Faysal.

Husayn defended Faysal's proposal concerning Islamic solidarity in the face of Nasir's claims that the concept masks a Western-inspired plot to counter Egyptian influence in the Middle East. In a clear reference to Egypt and Syria, Husayn charged that some countries had "thrown themselves into the laps of the Communist camp." He accused the Soviet Union and Communist China of trying to subvert the Middle East, and said that all hope for cooperating with the Cairo-supported Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) had "vanished."

The speech has precipitated intense propaganda warfare between Amman radio and the PLO, which broadcasts from Cairo. The PLO has attempted to stir up internal troubles for Husayn among Jordan's sizable Palestinian population by urging Palestinian ministers to resign from the King's cabinet and by alleging that a "Palestine National Revolutionary Front" in Jordan is already calling for the liquidation of Husayn's regime.

These polemics may well stimulate increased dissident activity in Jordan, possibly including assassination attempts against Husayn or other officials, even though Jordanian Palestinians as a whole do not appear to be seriously aroused.

Amman has also been exchanging recriminations with the Baathist regime in Syria.

Cairo's radio and press, meanwhile, have continued their campaign against Saudi King Faysal by calling him an "enemy of Arabism" and by attempting to portray him as an ally of "imperialism" in referring to his visit to Washington. Cairo has also criticized Faysal for going to New York despite Mayor Lindsay's "insolence" in denying the King any official attention because of the King's statement that Jews who support Israel are enemies of the Arabs.

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